

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 6-9 and 14-22 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 6-8 are amended, and claims 4, 5 and 10-13 are cancelled.

This Amendment should be entered after final rejection at least because it places the features of previously objected-to claim 5, as well as intervening claim 4, into claim 1, and cancels certain other claims, and thus places this application in condition for allowance.

As noted above, the features of claims 4 and 5 have been incorporated into independent claim 1. In addition, claims 6-8, which previously depended from claim 4, have been amended to depend from claim 1. Accordingly, no new matter is added by the above amendments.

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claims 14-22.

The body of the Office Action did not address claim 5. Applicants note that the previous Office Action indicated that claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Thus, it is believed that the Office Action intended to repeat its assertion that claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Accordingly, as described above, the features of claim 5 and intervening claim 4 have been placed into claim 1, thus placing claim 1 and its dependent claims 2, 3 and 6-9 in condition for allowance. In addition, rejected independent claim 10 and its dependent claims 11-13 have been cancelled.

Claims 1-4 and 6-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,678,410 to Fujita et al. This rejection is moot in view of the above amendments to the claims.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further would be desirable to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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